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ABSTRACT

Emporia State University's (Kansas) teacher education program conducted research to determine how it could help interested students meet new admission standards and enter the teacher education program. Analysis of records of students who had not met the program's new standards indicated that some students were not aware of the new standards and requirements, while others were having difficulty completing these requirements. The program now provides assistance in preparing students for required tests and also information regarding the program's requirements. Information sheets and checklists for completing requirements have been developed. The director of teacher admissions also visits each Introduction to Teaching class to orient students to the admission requirements. (CB)

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ENABLING TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS TO MEET INCREASED ADMISSION STANDARDS

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of
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Statement of the Problem

Colleges of education have been under pressure in recent years to raise standards for teacher education students. In response to such pressures, the Regents of the Kansas public university system instituted higher admission standards for students seeking entrance to teacher education classes. Individual universities within the system also increased some requirements. With teacher education enrollments already declining, these higher standards cause further reductions in the number of students entering teacher education programs in the state. What proactive things can be done by a university teacher education program to enable the maximum possible number of interested students to meet the new admission standards and enter teacher education?

Description of the Research

At Emporia State University, students desiring entrance to specified teacher education courses at the junior level must meet higher standards for admission. Standards set by the university include completion of required coursework with a grade of "C" or better (see Table 4) and completion of the Pre-Professional Skills Test (Educational Testing Service) in reading with a score of 172 or better. In addition to these requirements, the state board of regents expects that students enrolled in the teacher education program will have completed the Pre-Professional Skills

Tests in writing and mathematics with a score of 172 or better and have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for all work completed at the college level.

While one can debate the wisdom of such requirements, especially mandating one standardized examination series as the single standard for measuring competence in basic skills, the important question for those working with students at the university level is to assist students desiring to enter teacher education in meeting the admission standards. Beginning in the fall of 1986, after the higher standards had been in place for approximately one year, a study was begun at Emporia State University to determine the extent to which students were being denied admission to teacher education because of the criteria that has been discussed.

By analyzing the number of students denied admission to teacher education and the standards not being achieved, it became quickly evident that there were two major causes for students meeting admission requirements: (1) some students were not aware of admission standards, especially for certain specific courses and completion of PPST exams, and (2) some students were having difficulty in successfully completing requirements. This data is summarized in Tables 1 and 2.

The problem of students who were not aware of specific course and examination requirements was caused, in part, by changes in the standards. For example, new standards for

secondary teacher education students required completion of a specific speech course, Fundamentals of Speech. In the recent past, students had their choice of two courses which would satisfy this requirement. Secondary "phase one" courses, those classes requiring that students meet admission standards prior to enrollment, were also changed with the addition of Educational Psychology as a phase one course. At Emporia State, students had been required to complete the Nelson Denny Reading Test to demonstrate their competency in reading. Even those students who had successfully passed the Nelson Denny test were required to take and successfully pass the PPST reading test.

Emporia State University also provides assistance to students in preparing for PPST tests. Laboratories are available for reading, writing, and mathematics, with diagnostic, prescriptive, and tutorial help available to students at no charge. A review session for the PPST exams is also available. Research by Dr. Leo Pauls (Table 3) indicated that students not passing the PPST reading examination in the fall of 1986 had made no use of the laboratories and extremely limited use of the review session.

Analysis of the data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 led to the following conclusions:

(1) Students needed more specific information about course and testing requirements for teacher education admission well in advance of their planned enrollment in phase one courses.

(2) Students needed information about the PPST tests, including registration procedures and when the tests should be taken to provide the student with the best chance to successfully pass the tests or retake tests not passed.

(3) Specific assistance available for students needing to upgrade skills required to pass PPST tests is available at the university, but students needed to be more aware of how to get this help and how much time will be required to prepare for the tests.

(4) Students needed to know where to go to ask questions about admission to phase one classes, certification, and student teaching.

A number of actions were taken to meet the needs diagnosed above. First, advising procedures for teacher education majors at the university were reviewed. Elementary education majors had access to a newly developed centralized advising system which brought student records together and standardized advisement for elementary majors. Secondary majors were more difficult to assist because advisors for secondary majors are often professors in the content areas. This made standardizing secondary advisement to provide needed information difficult.

To improve secondary advisement, secondary advisors met together and discussed requirements. Information sheets about requirements, recording sheets for analyzing student completion of requirements, and a resource person to contact when questions about admission arose were provided to the advisors.

To reduce frustration of secondary students who found themselves improperly enrolled in phase one classes at the beginning of a semester, phase one classes were "closed" for registration, with a permit needed for enrollment. To obtain the permit, students were required to check off their completion of course, testing, and grade point average requirement on a form. After permits were given, transcripts were ordered to verify the completion of the requirements by each student and letters to students not meeting standards were mailed as soon as possible. This reduced the number of students improperly registered in phase one classes on the first day of class, especially during the fall semester, 1987, and permitted students to adjust their programs of study earlier when such changes were needed.

Perhaps the most helpful innovation brought about by analyzing this data was that the director of teacher education admissions now visits every entry level Introduction to Teaching class each semester at the university and conducts an orientation meeting to the requirements for admission to teacher education. Information provided to students in these early classes includes: course requirements, testing requirements, procedures for registering in PPST tests, at what point to take PPST tests, assistance available for students who may have difficulty, and resource people available to answer admission questions or concerns. By providing this

information early in the student's sequence of classes, better student planning is facilitated.

Areas for Further Study

In order to continue to provide maximum assistance to students in meeting admission standards, further data will need to be compiled and analyzed:

(1) The impact of the innovations described on numbers of students not meeting admission requirements will need to be continually monitored and studied with additional modifications made as needed.

(2) Better communication with community colleges which prepare transfer students for the University to assure that students planning to transfer to the University and enroll in teacher education are aware of requirements.

(3) The long-term impact of higher standards for admission to teacher education at the University level needs to be studied to determine how many students denied admission are never admitted to teacher education.

(4) The impact, if any, of new requirements on specific groups needs to be evaluated to determine if a disproportionate number of one sex, minority groups, certain majors, and/or students from certain geographical areas of the state are being denied admission to phase one classes. This information may be useful in helping to encourage the institution and the state board to modify requirements or provide alternatives for meeting admission standards.

(5) Efforts need to be made to continue to attempt to verify or refute the value of specific course requirements, tests, and grade point average requirements in

reliably predicting the effectiveness of future teachers.

Conclusion

In reaction to pressure to upgrade the quality of teaching, teacher education programs are being asked to raise standards for admission. To reduce the impact of higher standards on students desiring admission to teacher education programs, university personnel need to study data related to admissions and assist the maximum number of students possible in meeting the higher standards. By improving advising procedures, giving information to students about requirements as early as possible in their college careers, and making sure that assistance is available to students who have deficiencies in skills needed to pass competency tests and coursework, universities take vital steps towards making excellence a reality.

TABLE 1

STUDENTS NOT MEETING REQUIREMENTS FOR PHASE ONE EDUCATION CLASSES

Semester	Failed PPST Math	Failed PPST Writing	Failed PPST Reading	Required Classes Not Completed	PPST Tests Not Taken	Grade Point Average
Fall, 1986	2	3	9	5	4	2
Spring, 1987	3	4	5	9	8	3
Summer, 1987	0	0	1	0	0	0
Fall, 1987	8	6	12	10	6	6
Total	13	13	27	24	18	11

TABLE 2

COMPARISON OF REJECTIONS AND ADMISSIONS FOR PHASE ONE CLASSES

Semester	Elementary Admissions	Elementary Rejections	Per Cent Rejected	Secondary Admissions	Secondary Rejections	Per Cent Rejected
Fall, 1986	35	7	16.67	41	13	24.07
Spring, 1987	52	13	20.00	51	14	21.53
Summer, 1987	0	0	--	6	1	14.29
Fall, 1987	64	11	14.67	81	20	19.80
Total	151	31	17.03	179	48	21.15

TABLE 3

STUDENTS NOT PASSING READING PPST WHO USED ASSISTANCE

FROM UNIVERSITY TO PREPARE FOR THE TEST

Data Compiled by Dr. Leo Pauls, Emporia State Univ., for Fall Semester, 1986

MAJOR AREA OF STUDY	ENROLLED IN CI 072?	ATTENDED RDG. LAB-REGULAR BASIS?	ATTENDED RDG. LAB-IRREGULAR BASIS?	ATTENDED 2-HR PPST REVIEW SESSION
PHE	No	No	No	Yes
MATH	No	No	No	No
BUE	No	No	No	No
HIS	No	No	No	No
BIO	No	No	No	No
BUE	No	No	No	No
MATH	No	No	No	No
MATH	No	No	No	No
MATH	No	No	No	No
ELEM	No	No	No	No
ELEM	No	No	No	No
ELEM	No	No	No	Yes
ELEM	No	No	No	Yes

TABLE 4---SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION TO ENTRY LEVEL CLASSES

EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY
1200 COMMERCIAL EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801-5087 316/343-1200
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SERVICES

TO: ALL ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION MAJORS

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION AND STUDENT TEACHING

ADMISSION TO TEACHER EDUCATION (PHASE I)

The following requirements must be met prior to enrollment in Phase I courses. For names of Phase I courses, see back of this sheet.

1. The student must be an upper division student (junior) in the university or hold a baccalaureate degree.
2. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5 for all college courses taken.
3. The student must pass the Pre-Professional Skills Tests (PPST) in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics with a minimum grade of 172 on each test. For additional information see back.
4. The student must have a grade of "C" or better in each of the following courses or their equivalent:

   English 107 (English Composition I)
   English 108 (English Composition II)
   Curriculum and Instruction 120 (Introduction to Teaching)

   FOR ELEMENTARY EDUCATION MAJORS ONLY:

   Speech 100 (Interpersonal Communication) OR Speech 101 (Fundamentals of Speech)
   Math 199 and Math 200 (Elementary Math I and II)

   FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION MAJORS ONLY:

   Speech 101 (Fundamentals of Speech)

FOR QUESTIONS REGARDING ADMISSION, CONTACT DR. LARRY LYMAN, VH 208, EXT. 5775.

ADMISSION TO STUDENT TEACHING (PHASE II)

The following additional requirements must be met for admission to student teaching:

1. Appropriate references must be filled out by faculty members.
2. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better for all course work taken.
3. The student must have earned a grade of "C" or better in all professional education courses.
4. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better for all professional education courses.
5. The student must pass additional tests given during Phase I.
6. The student must have the approval of his or her academic department.

FOR STUDENT TEACHING QUESTIONS, CONTACT DR. MIKE MOREHEAD, VH 208, EXT. 5486

PHASE I COURSES

ELEMENTARY

CI312-Introduction to Early Childhood Education

EE313-Reading for the Elementary Teacher I

EE314-Teaching Social Studies in Elementary School

EE315-Teaching Language Arts in Elementary School

EE316-Teaching Science in Elementary Schools

EE317-Teaching Mathematics in the Elementary School

EE320-Observation and Teaching Participation

EE413-Reading for the Elementary Teacher

EE414-Reading Practicum

SECONDARY

CI333-Principles of Secondary Education

PY334-Educational Psychology

CI416-Teaching Reading in Secondary Schools

PRE-PROFESSIONAL SKILLS TESTS

Enrollment and registration for the PPST tests is a two phase activity. Students are responsible for the entire procedure. Advisors will assist.

1. Enroll in CW001 (Writing), CW002 (Reading), CW003 (Math) during appropriate enrollment periods. This will assure the students that test results will be put on their transcripts.

2. Register and pay fees for the tests by communicating directly with the testing company. This activity must be completed at least one month prior to the testing date. materials and information may be obtained at the Registrar's Office, PH 104, the Education Measurements office, PH 14, the Student Advising Center, PH 204, and any divisional advising center.

   Additional information may be obtained from James C. Shepard, Director of Competency Examination Program, VH 321, Ext. 5818.

CERTIFICATION

Questions regarding requirements for teacher certification may be addressed to Dr. Darrell Wood or Dr. Scott Waters, VH 208, Extension 5412.